

# EDINBURGH CHAMBERS' JOURNAL

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## IT CAN'T BE DONE.

WE had lately occasion to employ some joiners to make an alteration in the passages of a house, and, on coming in the course of the day to see how the work was advancing, found that they were proceeding upon a plan which threatened much inconvenience, but which was the most obvious that could have been adopted. We suggested another mode, by which the inconvenience might be avoided; but there was something eccentric about it, something inconsistent with the usual practice of the craft, and we accordingly received for answer, "Why, sir, it can't be done." We insisted, nevertheless, on our proposal being adopted, and it was so, but under a strong protest from the foreman, disclaiming all responsibility for the result, and not without some ill-suppressed sneers and grumbings on the part of the subordinate operatives. On the conclusion of the work, it was found precisely suitable; nor did any evil consequence of any kind flow from our having followed our own judgment.

We would say—and we of course say it in all friendly good-humour—that the "It can't be done" of our friend the foreman is a phrase too prevalent among artificers. If, in the thing which you employ them to fabricate—a pair of shoes, for instance, or any other piece of clothing—you require, for taste or necessity, any departure from the usual rule, it is three to one that you are met with this "It can't be done;" or, if the work be undertaken, you are almost equally sure to have it executed in the usual manner, and all your remonstrances answered with a retrospective version of the phrase—"It *couldn't* be done." The habit of working after a particular fashion—the blinding effects of custom—incapacitate the greater number of mechanics for taking up and adapting their ingenuity to particular cases; and it is only a small proportion of lively and salient minds who can be induced to break through the dogged and *perversely straight-forward* system of their respective professions. These clever fellows are probably those who attain promotion; but there should be more of them. An individual who, for whatever reason or purpose, requires articles of extraordinary construction, often experiences the greatest difficulty in getting workmen willing, not to say able, to take up the specialties of the case. We know, for instance, one unhappy gentleman, who declares, with reference to a particular part of his dress, where nature has called for a slight departure from the usual forms, under the penalty of very severe suffering, that he was twenty-five years of age, and endured tortures often nearly insupportable, before he happened to encounter a tradesman, who, for love or money, would yield to the necessities of the case—and that tradesman was one, who, requiring something like the same uncommon measure himself, could only be supposed to act through—shall we say?—a selfish sympathy.

"It can't be done," however, is an aphorism by no means confined to the plodding arts, or the more industrious departments of society. It affects classes of much higher pretension, and who, we may venture to prophesy, will be much longer in abandoning it than the rapidly improving operative classes. It is a protective speech for the indolent, the timid, the self-sufficient, and the obstructive, of all orders. Tell the sluggard to rouse himself to some particular exertion which will clearly tend to his advantage: he turns himself in his bed, and, yawning forth an "It can't be done," is once more asleep almost before the sentence is concluded. Tell the fearful man—some poor fellow who has been scowled, oppressed, and buffeted out of all spirit and energy—that there is at length

some prospect of his being able to take a bolder position, where he may defend himself from contumely and injury: he shrinks from the very idea, and murmuring "It can't be done," resigns himself to what he has long been disposed to think "his fate." Tell the professional man, who, like certain animals, has taken one meal of knowledge and gone to sleep for ever, or any other sort of person who regularly opposes every thing till it is established, and then "encumbers it with help," that there is a project for applying steam to navigation, or gas to domestic use, or the monitorial system to education, and he instantly meets you with a blighting "It can't be done." Every thing great and useful has to go through an "It can't be done" stage, during which, in some instances, how many noble spirits are condemned to sigh themselves into atrophy, or chafe themselves into madness! The heart-break of Columbus was, "It can't be done." It is the most sluggish, the most cowardly, the most cruel, the most pernicious of maxims.

The generation of *It can't be done's* is also not uncommon in the army. For some time after the commencement of the Peninsular war, Lord Wellington had an adjutant-general (perhaps we are mis-stating the office, but it is of little consequence) who had seen a good many previous campaigns, and was a very respectable officer, according to ordinary views, but never received an order without starting objections, and usually went away with an appearance of utter despair as to the possibility of carrying the project into execution. The commander-in-chief soon perceived that this worthy gentleman, with his constant "It can't be done," was quite unsuitable to the new mode of carrying on war; and it therefore became a matter of great importance that a proper substitute should be found. Wellington had chanced lately to give one or two occasional orders of a somewhat difficult kind to a young captain, who, in receiving them, had not betrayed the slightest mark of either surprise at the nature of the command, or fear for its execution, but, with a simple assent, had gone promptly off to do what was required. This man he immediately elevated to the office in question, and it is said that no commander ever had a better assistant. On another occasion, some delay had taken place in the bringing of some boats with provisions up one of the Portuguese rivers, and a commissariat officer, who was responsible for the duty, was summoned to the presence of the chief. "Why are those boats not yet brought up?" The difficulty—one evidently easy to be surmounted—was stated. "Look you, sir," replied the commander, "if they are not brought up to-morrow at ten o'clock, you shall be broke." The boats were brought up.

Perhaps there is no class of men who are more under the benumbing influence of this miserable aphorism, than the professors of the law. The habit of yielding respect to precedent, and keeping up antiquated forms of phraseology as essential to the validity of what they are engaged to do, seems to fix itself upon them, and affect all the processes of their understandings. No matter how clumsy, how tedious, how expensive, how vexatious are the forms of their profession; they are deemed sacred from the touch; they must not, they cannot be altered. It is on this account that we still labour under the influence of usages which were adapted to a rude state of society, and the continuance of which in the present age is a burlesque on the presumed intelligence of the nation. It is on no other account that pretty nearly an acre of writing is still required to convey a property not much greater in extent, and the price of which will barely pay the

expenses of transfer. It is on no other account that the cost of recovery of a debt, in many instances, far exceeds the sum which is sued for. Every body sees that all this is nonsense, except the men who are interested in supporting it, or who have had their understandings narrowed by long continuance in the antiquated practices; and, therefore, we have the sorry consolation of knowing that some hundreds of years may elapse before our posterity shall be more comfortable in this respect than ourselves. An exemplary instance of the impracticability of this order of men lately came under our observation. We mentioned to a gentleman in connection with the higher criminal courts, that it was certainly a most injurious practice to confine individuals accused of crimes for a period of three and four months previously to trial, making them associate together in the interval, and therefore either punishing them before they were proved to be guilty, or allowing them to contaminate each other by their society. "Oh, it cannot be otherwise," he replied; "they are tried as soon after the commission of the offence as possible; no better plan could be devised; the law is quite decisive on the subject." It was in vain we represented that the *whole* system should be altered—the courts sitting daily if necessary—both for the sake of the community and of individuals. He could not see the force of the argument. From having looked for years at a particular routine of procedure, he could not imagine the possibility of any thing better. The idea was too new to be comprehended. Any change *must* be for the worse. "It can't be done."

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ANIMALS.

NATURE—by which, as a phrase of convenience, we generally prefer denoting the great Creating and Disposing Power—has appointed very few forms of animal or vegetable life to be localised in any portion of the globe approaching to its entire terrestrial surface. The most of them are calculated for certain degrees of heat and cold, and, accordingly, are to be found distributed in rings or zones around the globe, or at certain altitudes on elevated grounds, with a direct reference in both cases to the temperature of the situation. Some minor circumstances are almost everywhere found to modify this general rule. The nature of the soil and surface; the different degrees of dryness and humidity, and the consequent character of the climate and vegetation; the comparative extent of land and water; the extent and continuity of forests, marshes, and sandy deserts; the direction of mountain ranges, the courses of rivers, the existence of waterfalls, and the form and position of lakes;—these and several other circumstances will be found materially to affect the distribution of animal life over the surface of the earth.\* A country may be insular, and thus be deficient in some species abounding on the neighbouring shores; or in advancing from a wild to a cultivated state, it may lose various tribes appropriate to the former condition. Thus, Ireland had no reptiles, till, at the close of the seventeenth century, they were introduced, by way of frolic, by a student of the Dublin University; and thus the wolf and wild boar, which formerly peopled our Caledonian forests, have for ages been extirpated. In some cases, animals are found to have been placed in situations, where alone of all others could they be properly sustained: the elephant, for instance, exists only in climates where vegetation is very luxuriant, so as readily to afford it a sufficiency of food. In some

\* Edinburgh Review, Hil. 330.

caves, animals are found to be placed in situations where their peculiar qualities may be highly useful and necessary to man: the camel, for instance, exists in sandy and desert countries, over which it is calculated, by the nature of its feet, and some extraordinary peculiarities of the digestive organs, to travel with large burdens, and where no other means of communication could be rendered available.

The animals to be found over the greater part of the earth are generally those which are universally useful, such as the dog and the horse. Some others, apparently of a very unimportant kind, as the crow, and a certain common kind of butterfly, are nearly universal; and this, we would be inclined to say, is a kind of proof that there is a utility in such creatures which we are not able to trace. Many of the animals found at a certain latitude in Africa are not common to the same latitude, or any other, in Asia, and many of those in Asia are not found in Africa. Many, again, of those found in certain climates of the Old World, as it is called, are not found any where in America; which in its turn possesses many not found in Europe, Asia, and Africa. The lion exists in Asia and Africa, and was formerly a denizen of Europe also; the tiger exists in Asia alone: neither of these creatures is found in America, which, however, has an animal somewhat akin to the tiger, named the jaguar, which does not inhabit any part of the eastern hemisphere. America also has the condor, the Washington eagle, the llama, and other great birds and beasts of prey, peculiar to itself. In North America, naturalists reckon a hundred and eight quadrupeds, of which only twenty-one species, or fifteen distinct animals, are common to the elder continent—the sheep, the deer, the squirrel, the water-rat, the fieldmouse, the beaver, the weasel, the seal, the fox, the wolf, the otter, the glutton, the bear, the shrew, and the mole. In the department of birds, there is perhaps even a larger proportion peculiar to America. Many of those creatures which are confined to particular continents, or to still narrower spaces of the earth's surface, seem to have been so voluntarily, or through the influence of some inscrutable constraint, for there are many other and by no means distant places, where, as far as we can judge, they could have lived equally well, and to which they must have in many instances been accidentally or designedly transported, or to which they might have easily transported themselves, if they had been inclined.

Whether all living creatures emanated from a central point, and thence found their way into distant lands, continental and insulated, or were diffusively created with a particular regard in each or in most cases for the character of particular soils and situations, is a question which, if it were proposed to be decided by facts, naturalists are not yet able to set at rest. Some of their speculations upon the subject are, nevertheless, exceedingly interesting.

"A discovery ship," says the writer of the able and learned article in the *Edinburgh Review*, above quoted, "under the guidance of brave men, surmounts with difficulty the terrors of the ocean, and after being months on the trackless main, and some thousand miles from any of the great continents of the earth, she arrives at last, and accidentally, at some hitherto unknown island of small dimensions, a mere speck in the vast world of waters by which it is surrounded. She probably finds the 'Lord of the Creation' there unknown; but though untrod by human footsteps, how busy is that lonely spot with all the other forms of active life! Even man himself is represented not unaptly by the sagacious and imitative monkeys, which eagerly employ so many vain expedients to drive from their shores what they no doubt regard as merely a stronger species of their race. 'Birds of gayest plumage' stand fearfully before the unsympathising naturalist, and at every step of the botanical collector, the most gorgeous but-terflies are wafted from the blossoms of unknown flowers, and beautify the 'living air' with their many splendid hues. Yet how frail are such gaudy wings! and how vainly would they now serve as the means of transport from that solitary spot, where all the present generations have had their birth! In what manner, then, did they become its denizens, or by what means were they transported to a point almost imperceptible, in comparison with the immeasurable extent of the circumjacent ocean?"

An ingenious French writer, M. Bory de St Vincent, selects, as an illustration of his sentiments on this subject, Mascareigne, or the Isle of Bourbon, situated a hundred and fifty leagues from the nearest point of Madagascar, from which it might, on a casual survey, be supposed to have derived its plants and animals. This remarkable island does not contain a particle of earth or stone which has not been originally submitted to the violent action of submarine volcanic fire. All its characters indicate a much more recent origin than that of the ancient continent. It bears about it an aspect of youth and novelty which recalls what the poets have felt or feigned of a nascent world, and which is only observable in certain other islands, also admitted among the formations of later ages. Mascareigne was at first one of those 'soudraux brulans' on the bosom of the ocean, similar to such as have since been seen to arise, almost in our own times, at Santorin and the Azores. Repeated eruptions of this submarine and fiery furnace, heaping up bed upon bed of burning lava, formed at last a mountain, or rocky island, which the shocks of

earthquakes rent in pieces, and on the heated surface of which the rains of heaven, speedily transformed into vapour, watered not

"the flowery lap  
Of some irriguous valley."

nor shed their refreshing influence over any possible form of vegetation. The fabled salamander alone might have become a denizen of that lurid rock,

"Dark, sultry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,  
Insect, or beast, or shape, or sound of life."

Now, by what means did a rich and beautiful verdure at last adorn it, and how have certain animals chosen for their peculiar abode an insulated spot, rendered by the nature of its origin uninhabitable for a long period after its first appearance, and during its progressive formation and increase? Winds, currents, birds, man himself—one or all of these causes sufficed, it will be said, to bring about such signal changes. First, the winds, bearing up impetuously the winged seeds with which so many plants are furnished, transport them to far distant countries. Secondly, currents, subjected under the torrid zone to a regular and continuous course, carry along with them such fruits as they have swept from their native shores, and deposit them on remote or opposing coasts. Thirdly, birds which feed on seeds, disgorge or otherwise deposit them on desert lands during their migratory flights. Lastly, man, who has navigated the ocean for so many centuries, may, at some remote period, have coasted the shores of such an island as Mascareigne, and left there the animals by which it is now characterised.

The following considerations are adduced to show the insufficiency of these causes to produce the supposed results. 1. Winds effectively carry with them, to a great distance, the lighter seeds of a certain number of vegetables; but it is doubtful whether they carry them one hundred and fifty leagues, to deposit them precisely on a lonely point, almost imperceptible in comparison with the immeasurable extent of the circumjacent ocean. Vegetables with winged seeds, susceptible of being floated through the air, are by no means numerous, especially in the island under consideration, and to which, consequently, the winds could have carried but a small number, if any, of the now indigenous species. 2. The currents of the ocean, it is admitted, may transport some fruits and seeds, capable of floating, along with the miscellaneous debris which is continually in the course of being swept away from the shores. Of this the coasts of Praslin, commonly called Maldivian coasts, furnish a familiar example. But does it ever happen that these fruits or seeds, after being subjected to the action of saline currents, are found to germinate? Salt water, if not utterly destructive, is at least highly injurious to the greater proportion of plants; and those unwearied botanists, whom the love of science has induced to brave the terrors of the ocean, know from fatal experience how hurtful the smallest sprinkling of sea-water proves to their botanical collections, both of plants and seeds. The only species which the waves of the sea are likely to obtain in good condition, are certain circumscribed tribes which grow along the shores, such as saltworts, thrifts, and a few cruciferae. But these tribes are almost entirely unknown in the island of Mascareigne. The seeds of forest and other larger trees, from the interior of countries and the elevated sides of mountains, which are occasionally met with by the sea-shore, could only have been brought there by torrents, or other natural accidents, after a lengthened and alternate exposure to excessive humidity and extreme dryness, in consequence of which they would in all probability be deprived of their natural faculty of reproduction. Even the cocoas before alluded to, enveloped both by a thick impenetrable shell and a kind of fibrous wadding, when carried by the oceanic currents from their natal soil, and thrown upon the Indian shores, or those of the archipelagoes, are never found in such a condition as to admit of vegetation. The truth is, that these and other fruits are incapable of floating at all till after they are dead, and, consequently, can never be conveyed to a distance either by winds or waves, till such time as they have entirely lost the power of germination. 3. It is not denied that certain frugivorous birds disseminate the germs of plants over the surface of those countries which they inhabit, and on the bark of trees where they repose; of which last mode the mistletoe, so frequent on apple-trees, is a familiar example; but it has been observed by ornithologists, that birds which feed on fruits and seeds are usually stationary, or at least of a much less migratory disposition than the insectivorous tribes, and more especially so in climates where the variations of the seasons never render necessary a change of place. There being nothing to attract them to a necessarily sterile rock, far removed on every side from those coasts which they might previously have inhabited, and entirely beyond the bounds of their accustomed flights, they cannot plausibly be considered as the means of transporting even that small number of seeds which are fitted by their peculiar structure to withstand the heat of the stomach, during the very short interval of time which is allowed to elapse before the utterly destructive process of digestion commences. On the other hand, birds of a more lofty and sustained flight, such as those which are habituated to seek their places of repose amid the insulated and sterile rocks of the ocean, derive their nourishment from fishes, molluscons animals, and other marine productions; and,

therefore, however in themselves fitted or ordained by their Creator to be the primitive inhabitants of Mascareigne, they are, by the very constitution of their nature, necessarily disenabled from acting as agents in the transmission of any species of plants. Lastly, man is not in the practice of planting lichens, mosses, and confervæ, among numerous other vegetable productions, none of which are cultivated, or in any way productive of the slightest benefit in the countries referred to. Man, who might have transported thither the stag or the goat, or certain insects which follow him wheresoever he goes, and in spite of himself, would not intentionally have introduced the mischievous apes, against which he now wages a fierce and unremitting war, nor those gigantic bats which hover through the evening air, and increase the obscurity of a short-lived twilight, nor the numerous and noxious reptiles which infest the fields and dwelling-places. Neither could he have transported the originals of all those splendid and innumerable insects, the 'gilded summer flies,' which commingle

"Their sports together in the solar beam,  
Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy."

Nor could he have been in any manner accessory to the peopling of the lakes and pools with those peculiar species of fresh-water fish, cray-fish, and aquatic insects, which the scientific zeal of naturalists has there discovered. Finally, that monstrous and extraordinary bird, the dodo, indigenous to the island under consideration, and which so greatly astonished the early settlers, could not have been carried from any other quarter of the world, because it was neither known previously, nor has it ever since been seen or heard of elsewhere.

It appears then inadmissible to suppose that all or any of these organised beings have been transported from the more ancient continents to the insulated positions which they now inhabit, either by the power of winds, the prevalence of currents, the agency of birds, or the influence of the human race. When, and by what means, then, may it be asked, were they there conveyed? This is the problem which many thoughtful inquirers have long sought, and probably will for ever seek, in vain to solve.

Few of those animals which we find either in Mascareigne or in other islands, whether remote or contiguous, can be said to have derived their primitive stock from other regions, even if the means of transfer could be demonstrated or rendered probable; because, with the exception of a very limited number of species which we find elsewhere under similar climates, each archipelago presents species, or even genera, which are peculiar and proper to it alone; so that, if these peculiar forms of life came originally from a distant country, not only must they have been transported from their pristine abodes, by means which at present we can neither demonstrate nor imagine, but the original races, if any such remained in the mother country, must have been entirely extirpated. Now, as it is a matter of certainty that many of these islands are of more recent origin than the great continents of the earth, some recent speculators have argued from this the necessity of admitting the possibility of a comparatively modern creation of animal and vegetable life, whenever such a concurrence of favourable circumstances has taken place in any particular point of our planet, as determines the completion of those wondrous plans which an all-wise and ever-provident Ruler had even fit previously to organise.

It has been observed that, for the most part, those animals which are found in islands, or greatly insulated continents, rarely inhabit other countries; for example, the species of New Holland and of South America do not occur in any of the ancient continents; and this has been adduced as a proof that the surface of the earth, and the relative positions of sea and land, have undergone several signal changes since the period at which animals became generally distributed over that surface, according to those peculiar laws of geographical allotment by which the particular localities of species and genera are now established and maintained.

As, however, a difference in respect to longitude is much less influential in the modification of climate, and the consequent production of a diversity of species, than an equal difference in respect to latitude, we find that the northern parts of North America exhibit a zoological aspect more allied to that of Norway, Lapland, and some of the corresponding parallels of Asia, than to the southern parts of the New World. For example, the wolf, the rein-deer, and the elk, are common alike to the northern parts of either continent; but with the exception of one or two species, chiefly feline, such as the puma, the animals of North and South America do scarcely in any respect correspond. Under more southern parallels, however, where the masses of land are separated by greater extent of intervening ocean, such countries as lie under the same latitude present a difference in the character of their zoological productions, apparently regulated in a great measure by their longitudinal distances. The equatorial regions of Asia, Africa, and America, possess no quadruped which is common to more than two of those regions; and were it not for the occurrence of the lion, the jackall, and one or two others, in each of the two first-named continents, it might be said that none of the three possessed a single mammiferous animal in common. Though New Holland produces a few birds which seem identical with the



species of Europe, its quadrupeds differ, without exception, not only from those with which we are familiar in Europe, but from those with which we are acquainted in any other quarter of the globe. They belong almost entirely to that anomalous group, named pouched or marsupial animals, of which we have likewise examples (though both specifically and generically distinct) in one of the American tribes."

We may observe, in conclusion, though at the risk of being accused of a love of hypothesis, that the absolutely necessary re-creation of the vegetable world after its last submersion, throwing aside all consideration of recently formed islands, leads analogically to the conclusion, that a similarly diffusive re-creation of animals might have taken place on the same occasion.

#### THE TWO KATES.\*

[By the author of "The Buccaneers," &c.]

"I CANNOT help observing, Mr Seymour, that I think it exceedingly strange in you to interfere with the marriage of my daughter. Marry your sons, sir, as you please; but my daughter! that is quite another matter."

And Mrs Seymour, a stately sedate matron of the high-heeled and hoop school, drew herself up to her full height, which (without the heels) was five foot seven; and fanning herself with a huge green fan more rapidly than she had done for many months, looked askance upon her husband, a pale delicate man, who seemed in the last stage of a consumption.

"A little time, Mary!" (good lack! could such a person as Mrs Seymour bear so sweet a name?) "a little time, Mary, and our sons may marry as they list for me; but I have yet to learn why you should have more control over our Kate than I. Before I quit this painful world, I should like the sweet child to be placed under a suitable protector."

"You may well call her child, indeed; little more than sixteen. Forcing the troubles of the world upon her, so young. I have had my share of them, heaven knows, although I had nearly arrived at an age of discretion before I united my destiny to yours."

"So you had, my dear; you were, I think, close upon forty!"

"Think, Mr Seymour, if you had married a grad-about, who would have watched over my children?" (she never by any chance said our children). "I have never been outside the doors (except to church) these four years! If you had married a termagant, how she would have flown at, and abused all your little—did I say little? I might with truth say, your great peculiarities. I never interfere, never; I only notice—for your own good—that habit, for instance, of always giving Kate sugar with her strawberries, and placing the tongs to the left instead of the right of the poker—it is very sad!" "My dear," Mr Seymour would interrupt, "what does it signify whether the tongs be to the right or left?"

"Bless me, dear sir, you need not fly out so; I was only saying that there are some women in the world who would make that a bone of contention. I never do, much as it annoys me—much as it leads the servants into careless habits—much as it and other things grieve and worry my health and spirits—I never complain! never. Some men are strangely insensible to their domestic blessings, and do not know how to value earth's greatest treasure—a good wife! But I am dumb; I am content to suffer, to melt away in tears—it is no matter." Then, after a pause to recruit her breath and complainings, she would rush upon another grievance with the abominable whine of an aggrieved and much-injured person—a sort of mental and monotonous wailing, which, though nobody minded, annoyed every body within her sphere. Her husband was fast sinking into his grave; her sons had gone from Eton to Cambridge; and when they were at home, took good care to be continually out of earshot of their mother's lamentations—the servants changed places so continually, that the door was never twice opened by the same footman—and the only fixture at Seymour Hall, where servants and centuries, at one time, might be almost termed synonymous, was the old deaf housekeeper, who, luckily for herself, could not hear her mistress's voice. To whom, then, had Mrs Seymour to look forward, as the future source of her comforts?—i.e. of her tormenting; even her daughter Kate—the bonny Kate—the merry Kate—the thing of smiles and tears—who danced under the shadow of the old tree—who sang with the birds—who learned industry from the bees, and cheerfulness from the grasshopper—whose voice told in its rich full melody of young joy and his laughing train—whose step was as light on the turf as the dew or the sunbeam—whose shadow was blessed as it passed the window of the poor and lowly cottager, heralding the coming of her who comforted her own soul by comforting her fellow-creatures.

Kate's father well knew that his days were numbered; and he looked forward with no very pleasurable feeling to his daughter's health and happiness being sacrificed at the shrine whereon he had offered up his own. Kate, it is true, as yet had nothing suffered: she managed to hear and laugh at her mother's repinings, without being rendered gloomy thereby, or giving offence to her mournful and discontented parent. She would, in her own natural and unsophisticated manner, lead her forth into the sunshine, sing her the gayest songs, read to her the most cheerful

books, and gather for her the freshest flowers; and sometimes even Mrs Seymour would smile, and be amused, though her heart quickly returned to its bitterness, and her soul to its discontent. But Mr Seymour knew that this buoyant spirit could not endure for ever, and he sought to save the rose of his existence from the canker that had destroyed him. She was earnestly beloved by a brave and intelligent officer, who had already distinguished himself, and who hoped to win fresh laurels whenever his country needed his exertions. It would be difficult to define the sort of feeling with which Kate received his attentions. Like all young, very young girls, she thought that affection ought to be kept secret from the world, and that it was a very shocking thing to fall in love; she consequently vowed and declared to every body, that "she had no idea of thinking of Major Cavendish—that she was too young, much too young, to marry—that her mamma said so."

I must observe, that Kate's extreme want of resemblance to either her mournful mother or her pale and gentle father, was not more extraordinary than that Major Cavendish, as we have said—the calm and dignified Major Cavendish at six-and-twenty—should evince so great an affection for the animated and girlish creature, whom, four years before his "declaration," he had lectured to, and romped with—but no, not romped—Major Cavendish was too dignified to romp, or to flirt either—what shall I call it then?—laughed?—yes, he certainly did laugh, generally after the most approved English fashion—his lips separated with a manifest desire to unite again as soon as possible, and his teeth, white and even, appeared to great advantage during the exertion. Nobody thought, that, though young and handsome, he would think of marriage, "he was so grave;" but on the same principle, I suppose, that the harsh and terrible thunder is the companion of the gay and brilliant lightning, majestic and sober husbands often most desire to have gay and laughing wives. Now, for the episode. Mrs Seymour had fretted herself to sleep, Mr Seymour had sunk into his afternoon nap, and Kate stole into her own particular room, to coax something like melody out of a Spanish guitar, the last gift of Major Cavendish.

There she sat on a low ottoman, her profile thrown into full relief by the background, being a curtain of heavy crimson velvet that fell in well-defined folds from a golden arrow in the centre of the architrave, while summer drapery of white muslin shaded the other side—her features hardly defined, yet exhibiting the tracery of beauty—her lips rich, full, and separated, as ever and anon they gave forth a low melodious accompaniment to her thrilling chords. There she sat, practising like a very good girl, perfectly unconscious that Major Cavendish was standing outside the window listening to his favourite airs played over and over again; and he would have listened much longer, but suddenly she paused, and looking carefully round, drew from her bosom a small case, containing a little group of flowers painted on ivory, which he had given her, and which, poor fellow, he imagined she cared not for, because, I suppose, she did not exhibit it in public! How little does mighty and magnificent man know of the workings of a young girl's heart! Well, she looked at the flowers, and a smile, bright and beautiful, spread over her face, and a blush rose to her cheek, and suffused her brow; and then it paled away, and her eyes filled with tears. What were her heart's imaginings, Cavendish could not say; but they had called forth a blush—a smile—a tear—love's sweetest tokens; and forgetting his concealment, he was seated by her side, just as she thrust the little case under the cushion of her ottoman! How prettily that blush returned when Cavendish asked her to sing one of his favourite ballads! the modest, half-coquettish, half-natural air, with which she said, "I cannot sing, sir, I am so very hoarse."

"Indeed, Kate! you were not hoarse just now." "How do you know?" "I have been outside the window for more than half an hour."

The blush deepened into crimson—bright glowing crimson—and her eye unconsciously rested on the spot where her treasure was concealed; and after more, far more than the usual repetition of sighs, and smiles, and protestations, and illustrations, little Kate did say, or perhaps (for there is ever great uncertainty in these matters) Cavendish said, "that, if papa or mamma had no objection—she believed—she thought—she even hoped;" and so the matter terminated. And that very evening she sang to her lover his favourite songs; and her father that night blessed her with so deep, so heartfelt, so tearful a blessing, that little Kate Seymour saw the moon to bed before her eyes were dry.

How heavily upon some do the shadows of life rest! Those who are born and sheltered on the sunny side of the wall know nothing of them. They live on sunshine—they wake 'till the sunshine—nay, they even sleep in sunshine.

Poor Mr Seymour, having gained his great object, married, in open defiance of his wife's judgment, his pretty Kate to her devoted Cavendish, laid his head upon his pillow one night about a month after, with the sound of his lady's complaining voice ringing in his changes from bad to worse in his aching ears—and awoke, before that night was past, in another world. Mrs Seymour had never professed the least possible degree of affection for her husband—she had never seemed to do so—never affected it until then. But

the truth was, she had started a fresh subject; her husband's loss—her husband's virtues—nay, her husband's faults—were all new themes; and she was positively charmed in her own way at having a fresh cargo of misfortunes freighted for her own especial use. She became animated and eloquent under her troubles; and mingled with her regrets for her "poor dear departed," were innumerable wailings for her daughter's absence.

Kate Cavendish had accompanied her husband, during the short deceitful peace of Amiens, to Paris; and there the beautiful Mrs Cavendish was distinguished as a wonder—"si amiable"—"si gentille"—"si naïve"—"si mignone." The most accomplished of the French court could not be like her, for they had forgotten to be natural; and the novelty and diffidence of the beautiful Englishwoman rendered her an object of universal interest. Pettet and fêted she certainly was, but not spoiled. She was not insensible to admiration, and yet it was evident to all that she preferred the affectionate attention of her husband to the homage of the whole world; nor was she ever happy but by his side. Suddenly the loud warwhoop echoed throughout Europe. Major Cavendish had only time to convey his beloved wife to her native country, when he was called upon to join his regiment. Kate Cavendish was no heroine. She loved her husband with so entire an affection—a love of so yielding, so relying a kind—she leaned her life, her hopes, her very soul, upon him, with so perfect a confidence, that to part from him was almost a moral death.

Youth little knows what hearts can endure; they little think what they must of necessity go through in this work-a-day world; they are ill prepared for the trials and turmoils that await the golden as well as the humbler pageant of existence. Kate Cavendish returned to her mother's house; her very thoughts seemed steeped in sorrow; and it was happy for her that a new excitement to exertion occurred, when, about five months after her husband's departure, she became a mother. Despite Mrs Seymour's prognostications, the baby lived and prospered; and by its papa's express command was called Kate.

How full of the true and beautiful manifestations of maternal affection were the letters of Mrs Cavendish to her husband! Little Kate was so very like him—her lip, her eye, her smile;—and then, as years passed on, and Major Cavendish had gained a regiment by his bravery, the young mother chronicled her child's wisdom, her wit, her voice—the very tone of her voice was so like her father's—her early love of study; and during the night watches, in the interval of his long and harassing marches, and his still more desperate engagements, Colonel Cavendish found happiness and consolation in the perusal of the outpourings of his own Kate's heart and soul. In due time, his second Kate could and did write those misshapen characters of affection, pot-hooks and hangers, wherein parents, but only parents, see the promise of perfection. Then came the fair round hand, so *en-bon-point*, with its hair and broad strokes; then an epistle in French; and at last a letter in very neat text, bearing the stamp of authenticity in its diction, and realising the hopes so raised by his wife's declaration, that "their Kate was all her heart could desire, so like him in all things." The life of Colonel Cavendish continued for some years at full gallop; days and hours are composed of the same number of seconds, whether passed in the solitude of a cottage or the excitement of a camp; yet how differently are they numbered! how very, very different is the retrospect!

Had Colonel Cavendish seen his wife, still in her early beauty, with their daughter half-sitting half-kneeling by her side, the one looking younger, the other older than each really was, he would not have believed it possible that the lovely and intelligent girl could be indeed his child, the child of his young Kate. A series of most provoking, most distressing occurrences, had prevented his returning, even on leave, to England; he had been ordered, during a long and painful war, from place to place, and from country to country, until at last he almost began to despair of ever seeing home again.

At last, one of the desolating battles that filled England with widows, and caused multitudes of orphans to weep in our highways, sent agony to the heart of the patient and enduring Kate: the fatal return at the head of the column, "*Colonel Cavendish missing*," was enough; he had escaped so many perils, not merely victorious, but unhurt, that she had in her fondness believed he bore a charmed life; and were her patience, her watchings, her hopes, to be so rewarded? was her child fatherless? and was her heart desolate? Violent was indeed her grief, and fearful her distraction; but it had, like all violent emotion, its reaction; she hoped on, in the very teeth of her despair; she was sure he was not dead—how could he be dead? he that had so often escaped—could it be possible, that at the last he had fallen? Providence, she persisted, was too merciful to permit such a sorrow to rest upon her and her innocent child; and she resolutely resolved not to put on mourning, or display any of the usual tokens of affection, although every one else believed him dead. One of the sergeants of his own regiment had seen him struck to the earth by a French sabre, and immediately after a troop of cavalry rode over the ground, thus leaving no hopes of his escape; the field of battle in that spot presented the next day a most lamentable spectacle: crushed were those so lately full of life, its hopes and expecta-

\* Abridged from *Friendship's Offering* for 1835.

tions; they had saturated the field with their life's blood; the torn standard of England mingled its colours with the standard of France; no trace of the body of Colonel Cavendish was found; but his sword, his rifle, purse, and portions of his dress, were picked up by a young officer, Sir Edmund Russell, who had ever evinced towards him the greatest affection and friendship. Russell wrote every particular to Mrs Cavendish, and said, that as he was about to return to England in a few weeks, having obtained sick leave, he would bring the purse and sword of his departed friend with him.

Poor Mrs Cavendish murmured over the word "departed," paled, shook her head, and then looked up into the face of her own Kate, with a smile beaming with a hope, which certainly her daughter did not feel:—"He is not dead," she repeated; and in the watches of the night, when in her slumbers she had steeped her pillow with tears, she would start, repeat "he is not dead," then sleep again. There was something beautiful and affecting in the warm and earnest love, the perfect friendship existing between this youthful mother and her daughter; it was so unlike the usual tie between parent and child; and yet it was so well cemented, so devoted, so respectful: the second Kate, at fifteen, was more womanly, more resolute, more calm, more capable of thought, than her mother had been at seven-and-twenty; and it was curious to those who note closely the shades of human character, to observe how, at two-and-thirty, Mrs Cavendish turned for advice and consolation to her high-minded daughter, and leaned upon her for support. The beauty of Miss Cavendish was like her mind, of a lofty bearing—lofty, not proud. She looked and moved like a young queen; she was a noble girl; and when Sir Edmund Russell saw her first, he thought—alas! I cannot tell *all* he thought—but he certainly "fell," as it is termed, "in love," and nearly forgot the wounds inflicted in the battle-field, when he acknowledged to himself the deep and ever-living passion he felt for the daughter of his dearest friend.

"It is indeed most happy for your mother," he said to her some days after his arrival at Sydney Hall, "it is indeed most happy for your mother that she does not believe what I know to be so true; I think, if she were convinced of your father's death, she would sink into despair."

"Falsehood or false impressions," replied Kate, "sooner or later produce a sort of moral fever, which leaves the patient weakened in body and in mind; I would rather she knew the worst at once; despair by its own violence works its own cure."

"Were it you, Miss Cavendish, I should not fear the consequences; but your mother is so soft and gentle in her nature."

"Sir Edmund, she *knew* my father—lived with him—worshipped him; the knowledge of his existence was the staff of her's; he was the soul of her fair frame. Behold her now—how beautiful she looks—those sunbeams resting on her head, and her chiselled features upturned towards heaven, tracing my father's portrait in those fleecy clouds, or amid yonder trees; and do you mark the hectic on her cheek?—could she believe it, I know she would be better; there's not a stroke upon the bell, there's not an echo of a footfall in the great avenue, but she thinks it his; at night she starts, if but a mouse do creep along the wainscot, or a soft breeze disturb the blossoms of the woodbine that press against our window; and then exclaims, 'I thought it was your father!'"

With such converse, and amid the rich and various beauties of a picturesque, rambling old country house, with its attendant green meadows, pure trout stream, and sylvan grottoes—sometimes with Mrs Cavendish, sometimes without her, did Kate and Sir Edmund wander, and philosophise, and fall in love.

One autumn evening, Mrs Seymour, fixing her eyes upon the old tent-stitch screen, said to her daughter, who as usual had been thinking of her husband, "Has it ever occurred to you, my dear Kate, that there is likely to be another fool in the family? I say nothing; thanks to your father's will, I have had this old rambling place left upon my hands for my life, which was a sad drawback: better he had left it to your brother."

"You might have given it up to Alfred, if you had chosen, long ago," said Mrs Cavendish, who knew well that, despite of her grumbling, her mother loved Sydney Hall as the apple of her eye. "What, and give the world cause to say that I doubted my husband's judgment! No, no: I am content to suffer in silence; but do you not perceive that your Kate is making a fool of herself, just as you did, my dear—falling in love with a soldier, marrying misery, and working disappointment." More, a great deal more, did the old lady say; but fortunately nobody heard her, for when her daughter perceived that her eyes were safely fixed on the tent-stitch screen, she made her escape, and, as fate would have it, encountered Sir Edmund at the door. In a few minutes he had told her of his love for her beloved Kate; but though Mrs Cavendish had freely given her own hand to a soldier, the remembrance of what she had suffered—of her widowed years, the uncertainty of her present state, anxiety for her child's happiness, a desire, a fear of her future well-being—all rushed upon her with such confusion, that she became too agitated to reply to his entreaties: and he rushed from the chamber, to give her time to compose herself, and to bring another whose entreaties would be added to his own:

he returned with Kate, pale, but almost as dignified as ever. Mrs Cavendish clasped her to her bosom.

"You would not leave me, child—would not thrust your mother from your heart, and place a stranger there?" "No, no," she replied; "Kate's heart is large enough for both."

"And do you love him?" The maiden hid her face upon her mother's bosom; yet though she blushed, she did not equivocate; but replied in a low firm voice, "mother, I do."

"Sir Edmund," said the mother, still holding her child to her heart, "I have suffered too much—too much, to give her to a soldier."

"Mother," whispered Catharine, "yet, for all that you have suffered, for all that you may yet endure, you would not have aught but that soldier husband, were you to wed again!"

No other word passed the lips of the young widow: again, again, and again, did she press her child to her bosom; then placing her fair hand within Sir Edmund's palm, rushed in an agony of tears to the solitude of her own chamber.

"Hark! how the bells are ringing," said Anne Leafy to Jenny Fleming, as they were placing white roses in their stomachs, and snooding their hair with fair satin ribands. "And saw you ever a brighter morning? Kate Cavendish will have a blithesome bridal; though I hear that Madam Seymour is very angry, and says no luck will attend this, no more than the last wedding!" The words had hardly passed the young maid's lips when a bronzed countenance pressed itself amid the roses of the little summer-house in which they sat arranging their little finery, and a rough and travel-soiled man inquired, "Of whom speak ye?"

"Save us!" exclaimed Jenny Fleming, who was a trifle pert. "Save us, master! why, at the wedding at the Hall, to be sure—Kate Cavendish's wedding, to be sure; she was moped long enough, for certain, and now is going to marry a brave gentleman, Sir Edmund Russell!" The stranger turned from the village girls, who, fearful of being late at the church, set away across the garden of the little inn, leaving the wayfarer in quiet possession, but with no one in the dwelling to attend the guests, except a deaf waiter, who could not hear "the strange gentleman's" questions.

The youthful bride and the young bridegroom stood together at the altar; and a beautiful sight it was, to see them on the threshold of a new existence. Mrs Cavendish might be pardoned for that she wept abundantly—partly tears of memory, partly of hope; and the ceremony proceeded to the words, "if either of you know any impediment," when there was a rush, a whirl, a commotion outside the porch, and the stranger of the inn rushed forward, exclaiming, "I know an impediment—she is mine!"

A blessing upon hoping, trusting, enduring woman! A thousand blessings upon those who draw consolation from the deepness of despair! The wife was right—her husband was not dead; and as Colonel Cavendish pressed his own Kate to his bosom, and gazed upon her face, he said, "I am bewildered! they told me false—they said Kate Cavendish was to be married! and —"

"And so she is," interrupted Sir Edmund Russell; "but from your hand only will I receive her: are there not two Kates, my old friend?"

What the noble soldier's feelings were, heaven knows—no human voice could express them—no pen write them: they burst from, and yet were treasured in his heart.

"My child!—that my daughter!—two Kates!—wife and child!" he murmured. Time had galloped with him, and it was long ere he believed that his daughter could be old enough to marry. The villagers from without crowded into the sweet village church; and moved by the noise, Mrs Seymour put on her new green spectacles, and stepped forward to where Colonel Cavendish stood trembling between his wife and child; then looking him earnestly in the face, she said, "After all, it is really you! Bless me, how ill you look! I never could bear to make people uncomfortable; but if you do not take great care, you will not live a month!"

"I said he was not dead," repeated his gentle wife: "and I said —" but what does it matter what was said?—Kate the second was married; and that evening, after Colonel Cavendish had related his hair-breadth 'scapes, and a sad story of imprisonment, again did his wife repeat, "I said he was not dead!"

#### THE IVY.

Why is it that every one is pleased with the common ivy? There is a charm about that plant which all feel, but none can tell why. Observe it hanging from the arch of some old bridge, and consider the degree of interest it gives to that object. The bridge itself may be beautifully situated; the stream passing through its arches clear and copious; but still it is the ivy which gives the finish and picturesque effect. Mouldering towers, and castles, and ruined cloisters, interest our feelings in a degree more or less by the circumstance of their being covered or not by the ivy. Precipices, which else would exhibit only their naked, barren walls, are clothed by it in a rich and beautiful vesture. Old trees, whose trunks it surrounds, assume a great variety of aspect; and, indeed, it is a most important agent in forming the beauty and variety of rural landscape. It is also as

useful as it is beautiful; and among its uses I would include the very thing of which I am now speaking, for I have no idea that the forms and colours in nature please the eye by a sort of chance. If I admire the ivy clinging to and surmounting some time-worn tower, and the various tints that diversify the parts of the ruin not hidden by it, I can only refer the pleasure I experience to the natural construction of the human mind, which the Almighty has formed to feel a pleasure in contemplating the external world around it. Who is insensible to the beauties of nature at the rising and setting of the summer's sun? Who can behold the moonbeams reflected from some silent river, lake, or sea, and not feel happy in the sight? None, I believe, in early life. When hardened in the ways of men—when the chief good pursued is the accumulation of wealth, the acquisition of power, or the pursuit of pleasure, so called—then mankind lose a sense of the beauties of nature; but never, perhaps, till then. A love for them is inherent in the mind, and almost always shows itself in youth; and if cherished at that period, by education, would seldom be destroyed or become dormant in after-life, as it now so generally is. The ivy is of vast advantage to the smaller birds, as it affords them shelter in winter, and a retreat for building their nests in spring and summer. It is in fructification in October and November, and the sweet juice which its flowers exude, supports an infinity of insects in autumn, while its berries are a store of nutriment for many birds in early spring.—*Drummond.*

#### SIR MICHAEL SCOTT.

LIKE Thomas the Rhymer, of whom we lately presented a brief memoir, Sir Michael Scott is the hero of numberless traditional anecdotes, which continue to this day to be related in all parts of Scotland, from the border to the remotest of the sea-encircled Hebrides. He is also an eminent personage in the national history, partly on account of his political services, and partly on account of his learning, of which he possessed no small share. We shall here present both the traditional and the historical accounts of this noted gentleman, so that the reader may have an opportunity of comparing the one with the other, and thus observing the strange liberties which ignorance in the first place, and finally popular report, are apt to take, through a series of unenlightened ages, with those whose pursuits are at once above the comprehension of the public mind, and patent to its observation.

#### TRADITIONAL ACCOUNT.

Michael Scott was a great wizard, who lived long ago, and was the laird of Balwearie, in Fife, and also of Aikwood Castle, in Etrick. He studied the black art for seven years at Oxford, and at last became so great a proficient, that there was hardly any thing which he could not do. He had always a set of brownies attending upon him, who used to torment him for work; and many are the wonderful things which these creatures did at his bidding. There is a deep road between Raith and Kirkcaldy, in Fife, which the brownies hollowed out in one night for him; and near Dolphinton, in Lanarkshire, there is a cut in a hilly ridge, through which the Edinburgh road passes, such as no mortal power could have attempted long ago, but which Michael's brownies made in the same way, carrying away the earth to a little distance, where they riddled it all most carefully into the exact shape of a sugar-loaf, not leaving a stone in it so big as a pigeon's egg.\* There was one of his servants that gave him a great deal of trouble, constantly calling upon him for something to do. He first set him to build a cauld [dam-head] across the Tweed at Kelso, which was only work to him for one night. Michael then ordered him to cleave the Eildon hill in three, and this was also done in a single night.† The distressed enchanter at last put him to twisting ropes out of sea-sand, which fairly settled him. The brownie is still in vain attempting to accomplish this work, as you may see at the going back of every tide.

Michael was chosen to go as ambassador to the king of France, to remonstrate against some piracies which his ships had committed upon mariners belonging to Scotland. Instead of preparing an equipage and retinue, the wise laird of Balwearie retired to his closet, opened his book of magic, and called up a black horse, which was nothing more nor less than the evil one himself. Having got upon his back, he set out for France, and was flying very much at his ease through the air, when the devil asked him what it was that the old women of Scotland muttered at bed-time. A less experienced wizard might have answered that it was the Paternoster; but Michael was too cunning to do that, knowing that it would have enabled the diabolic steed to throw him from his back into the sea.

\* The works here alluded to are of so extraordinary a kind, that to any one who sees them, it cannot appear wonderful that the common people should ascribe them to the agency of necromancy. The conical hill, in particular, if a primordial work of nature, is certainly one of a most uncommon character.

† This, it must be owned, is woefully at variance with history; for the triple top of this hill attracted the attention of the Romans a thousand years before the days of the wizard, and was described by them under the title of *Trimonium*. One of its tops also bears a camp of the Romans.



So he evaded the question, and soon after arrived at the palace of the king of France, which he boldly entered, leaving his horse at the gate. When the king saw that he had no retinue, he turned away with scorn, and would not so much as hear his message. Michael, however, requested him to wait till he should see his horse stamp three times. The first stamp shook every steeple in Paris, and caused all the bells to ring. The second threw down three of the towers of the palace; and the terrible courser had lifted his hoof to give the third stamp, when the king rather chose to dismiss the ambassador with ample concessions, than stand to the probable consequences.

Michael one day became very hungry in travelling, and passing a house where he smelt newly-baked scones, he desired his man John to go and request one of them from the goodwife. She refused this small favour, on the plea that she had no more than enough to satisfy the reapers for whom she had been baking them. Michael then gave the man his bonnet, desiring him to take it into the house, and lay it down upon the floor. When this was done, the bonnet became suddenly inflated, and began to run round the fire with great speed, pursued by the goodwife, who continually cried,

Maister Michael Scott's man  
Came seeking meat, and gat none;  
So round about the fire I rin,  
With marled legs and birlsd skin.

By and bye, the Goodman and his shearers came home from the field for their dinner, and becoming liable to the same enchantment, joined in the dance, and also in the cry, so that it was like a house of bedlamites. At last, when he thought he had punished the wife sufficiently for her want of hospitality, he took up his bonnet, and relieved them, but not till they were all like to drop down with fatigue.

Notwithstanding all the power which Michael enjoyed through his art, his books, and his ministering spirits, he was at last outwitted by a woman, who, having wiled him into a confession that he could defy every thing except broth made from the flesh of a breme sow, gave him a mess of that kind, of which he died, but not before he had put to death his treacherous confidante. There are different accounts as to the place of his burial, some saying that it was at Holm Cultram, in Cumberland, and others at Melrose Abbey. There are also different accounts of the fate of his magical books, which some allege to have been interred in his grave, while others represent them as existing at no remote time, but defying all attempts to read them through. The doggerel poet, Scott of Satchells, who wrote in the seventeenth century, says that, in 1629, happening to be at Burgh, near Bowness, in Cumberland, he was shown a volume which was said by the person possessing it to be the works of Michael Scott.

He said the book which he gave me,  
Was of Sir Michael Scott's historie;  
Which historie was never yet read through,  
Nor never will, for no man dare it do.  
Young scholars have picked out something  
From the contents, but dare not read within.  
He carried me along the castle then,  
And showed his written book hanging on an iron pin.  
His writing pen did seem to be  
Of hardened metal, like steel, or acumie;  
The volume of it did seem so large to me,  
As the Book of Martyrs and Turk's Historie.  
Then in the church he let me see  
A stone where Mr Michael Scott did lie.  
He showed me none durst bury under that stone,  
More than he had been dead a few years ago;  
For Mr Michael's name does terrify each one.

The name of the wizard was transmitted to a progeny, who long after possessed the estate of Balwearie, and in one instance at least was supposed to retain also some portion of the magical power of their great ancestor. It is said that King James VI. once paid a visit to Sir James Scott of Balwearie, and that, after he had entered the courtyard of the castle, the jocular baron called out hastily to shut the gates, by way of giving the king a fright. James, recollecting the Raid of Ruthven and similar circumstances in his early days, did not relish such jests, and, calling out treason, ordered his host into custody. Sir James was confined in Edinburgh Castle, in anticipation of a very rigorous and probably fatal trial, when his daughter, Dame Janet, appeared in the guise of a dancing maiden before the monarch at Holyroodhouse, and was allowed, at her humble request, to perform a measure in his presence. She danced with such exquisite grace, that the delighted king cried out, "A boon, a boon!" by which it was implied that she might ask any thing she pleased, with the certainty of its being granted. The young gentlewoman then announced herself as Dame Janet Scott of Balwearie, and begged her father's liberty and life. This so much mortified James, that he vowed he would not accede to the request till she had gone through a dance with a full glass of wine placed on her head, of which not one drop should be spilled. To the astonishment of the court, she performed this feat; after which the king could present no further obstacle to her wish. He did not fail, however, to remember her descent from *Auld Michael*, and thus to account for the singular dexterity which she had displayed. He even seemed to retain a kind of grudge against the Dancing Daughter of Balwearie, as he designated her; and accordingly, on learning some years after that his trusty counsellor and friend, Boswell of Balmuto, was

about to unite himself to her in marriage, he wrote the following highly characteristic letter:—"Ah, Johnie, Johnie, your weel days are dune, gif ye marry the Dancing Tochter o' Balwearie." She proved nevertheless a good wife; but the country people have still a notion that she verified the royal prediction, by causing large portions of her husband's estate to be detached for the benefit of her younger sons, and thus impairing the consequence of the principal house.

#### HISTORICAL ACCOUNT.\*

Michael Scott was born about the year 1214. The precise locality of his birthplace is unknown, although that honour has been awarded to Balwearie, in Fife, but on insufficient authority. Neither is there any thing known of his parents, nor of their rank in life; but, judging of the education he received, one of the most liberal and expensive of the times, it may be presumed that they were of some note.

Scott early betook himself to the study of the sciences; but soon exhausting all the information which his native country afforded in those unlettered times, he repaired to the university of Oxford, then enjoying a very high reputation, and devoted himself, with great eagerness and assiduity, to philosophical pursuits, particularly astronomy and chemistry; in both of which, and in the acquisition of the Latin and Arabic languages, he attained a singular proficiency. At this period, astronomy, if it did not assume entirely the shape of judicial astrology, was yet largely and intimately blended with that fantastic but not unimpressive science; and chemistry was similarly affected by the not less absurd and illusive mysteries of alchemy; and hence arose the imaginary skill and real reputation of Scott as a wizard, or foreteller of events; as in proportion to his knowledge of the true sciences, was his imputed acquaintance with the false.

On completing his studies at Oxford, he repaired, agreeably to the practice of the times, to the university of Paris. Here he applied himself with such diligence and success to the study of mathematics, that he acquired the academic surname of Michael the Mathematician; but neither his attention nor reputation were confined to this science alone. He made equal progress, and attained equal distinction in sacred letters and divinity; his acquirements in the latter studies being acknowledged, by his having the degree of doctor in theology conferred upon him.

While in Paris, he resumed, in the midst of his other academical avocations, the study of that science on which his popular fame now rests, namely, judicial astrology, and devoted also a farther portion of his time to chemistry and medicine. Having possessed himself of all that he could acquire in his particular pursuits in the French capital, he determined to continue his travels, with the view at once of instructing and of being instructed. In the execution of this project, he visited several foreign countries and learned universities; and amongst the latter, that of the celebrated college at Padua, where he eminently distinguished himself by his essays on judicial astrology. From this period, his fame gradually spread abroad, and the reverence with which his name now began to be associated, was not a little increased by his predictions, which he, for the first time, now began to publish, and which were as firmly believed in, and contemplated with as much awe in Italy, where they were first promulgated, as they were ever at any after period in Scotland.

From Italy he proceeded to Spain, taking up his residence in Toledo, whose university was celebrated for its cultivation of the occult sciences. Here, besides taking an active part, and making a conspicuous figure in the discussions on these sciences, he began and concluded a translation, from the Arabic into Latin, of Aristotle's nineteen books on the History of Animals. This work procured him the notice, and subsequently the patronage, of Frederick II., who invited him to his court, and bestowed on him the office of royal astrologer. While filling this situation, he translated, at the emperor's desire, the greater part of the works of Aristotle. He wrote, also, at the royal request, an original work, entitled "Liber Introductorius sive Indicia Questionum," for the use of young students; and a treatise on physiognomy, entitled "Physiognomia et de Hominis Procreatione;" besides several other works, of which one was on the "Opinions of Astrologers."

After a residence of some years at the court of Frederick, Michael resigned his situation, and betook himself to the study of medicine as a profession, and soon acquired great reputation in this art. Before parting with the emperor, with whom he seems to have lived on a more intimate and familiar footing than the haughty and warlike disposition of that prince might have been expected to permit, he predicted to him the time, place, and manner of his death; and the prophecy is said to have been exactly fulfilled in every particular. After a residence of some years in Germany, he came over to England, with the view of returning to his native country. On his arrival in the latter kingdom, he was kindly received and patronised by Edward I.; and after being retained for some time at his court, was permitted to pass to Scotland, where he arrived shortly after the death of Alexander III. That event ren-

\* From Chambers's Scottish Biographical Dictionary; Blackie and Son, Glasgow. An elaborate and minute life of Scott has been introduced by Mr Tytler into his "Lives of Scottish Worthies," Murray's Family Library.

dering it necessary to send ambassadors to Norway, to bring over the young queen Margaret, or, as she is more poetically called, the Maid of Norway, granddaughter of the deceased monarch, Michael Scott, now styled Sir Michael, although we have no account either of the time or occasion of his being elevated to this dignity, was appointed, with Sir David Weems, to proceed on this important mission, a proof that his reputation as a wizard had not affected his moral respectability. With this last circumstance, the veritable history of Sir Michael terminates; for his name does not again appear in connection with any public event, nor is there any thing known of his subsequent life. He died in the year 1292, at an advanced age.

#### ENGLISH SONGS.

##### SECOND ARTICLE.

As already mentioned, the poets of the eighteenth century were in general indifferent song-writers. A song, to be successful, must be the expression of some very lively, almost irrepressible, and decidedly natural and unaffected train of ideas. The versifiers of those days were too tame and studious of rule, either to understand this necessity, or, if they had comprehended it, to be successful in obeying it. The great mass of the compositions which they present as songs, are short dull poems, conceived in a strain of vicious affectation, and which nothing but fashion could have tolerated. Out of the whole number, no doubt, a few have been floated by their merit down to our own day, and must still be esteemed for almost every good quality which a song ought to possess. But these, we must recollect, are only exceptions—happy hits—things conceived under the favour of some ardent sentiment, overpowering the habitual mannerism of the muse. We can only estimate the general character of this species of poetry during the last century, by inspecting the collections of "favourite songs," which were published from time to time throughout that period; in many of which, it would be found that there is not one song which is now so much as remembered—the whole a waste of the most miserable trash, disgracing the music of Handel, Arne, Lampe, and Chilcot, to which too many of them were set.

One of these vocal volumes, published in 1746, is entitled "Amaryliss, a collection of such songs as are most in vogue, in best esteem, and particularly sung at the public theatres and gardens, regularly fitted for voice, violin, hautboy, flute, and German flute, with a figured base for the harpsichord." The title gives a vignette, in which Meliboeus is represented as congratulating Tityrus on his being permitted to sing the praises of the fair nymph whose name is adopted for the book. Song first is one in honour of the Duke of Cumberland for his victory over the Scottish insurgents—

From scourging Rebellion, and baffling proud France,  
Crowned with laurels, behold British William advance;

His triumph to grace and distinguish the day,  
The sun brighter shines, and all nature is gay.

Another, entitled "Pretty Phillis," commences thus—

Phillis has each pleasing art,  
That the youthful can inhale;  
First she wins the lover's heart,  
Then she leaves him to despair.

The initiatory lines of a few others may be quoted, as sufficient to give an idea of the general style of the poetry. "Stella and Flavia every hour, Do various hearts surprise,"—"Guardian angels now protect me, Send me the man I love; Cupid with thy bow defend me, Help me all ye powers of love,"—"One summer's eve, as Strephon roved, Involved in thought profound,"—"When mighty Sol at noon of day, With sultry beams began to play, I wandered through a verdant glade, Seeking the most obliging shade,"—"While I fondly view the charmer, Thus the God of Love I sue, Gentle Cupid pray disarm her, Cupid, if you love me, do,"—"As Damon on a summer day, Beside a brook began his lay, The cooling waters passed along, Well pleased at Damon's happy song." The songs are surmounted by small illustrative prints, most of which contain very curious memorials of the dresses and manners of a past day. In one a damsel in a voluminous hoop, with a tall crooked stick in her hand, and a few "smiling plains" around her, will represent a shepherdess. In another, presenting an old regularly laid out garden, a formal lady in hoop, fan, and pinnars, is seen in the act of curtsying to an equally formal gentleman in the long swinging coat of the period, and a flowing periwig. A convivial ditty is headed with a set of gentlemen in cocked hats sitting round a table covered with bowl and glasses—the scene an esplanade in front of an elegant country

seat. Another gives a gentleman in a dining-room, in the act of addressing a tender ditty to a billet-doux which he had just finished—an old-fashioned apartment, well hung with pictures, and the chairs of which have those long backs and formal curved baluster legs which to a fanciful eye seem so ludicrously appropriate to the corresponding portions of the human body as dressed at that time. The appropriateness, indeed, of the songs to the embellishments, and of the various parts of the embellishments to each other, are alike striking; and the general effect is, we need hardly say, extremely anti-poetical.

The exceptions, however, are in many cases admirable. How truly beautiful the "Black-eyed Susan" of Gay, and how sprightly many of the little ditties of the *Beggars' Opera*! Even where the cast of the poetry may almost be too formal for a successful song, we cannot help admiring the lyric. Thus, Ambrose Phillips, in general the most namby-pamby of poets, immortalised himself by the fine liquid measures of

Blest as the immortal gods is he,  
The youth who fondly sits by thee,  
And hears thee, sees thee, all the while,  
Softly speak and sweetly smile—&c.

Nor can we help having a warm side to the "Amanda," as it is called, of Thomson—

For ever, fortune, wilt thou prove  
An unrelenting foe to love,  
And, when we meet a mutual heart,  
Come in between and bid us part;  
Bid us sigh on from day to day,  
And wish and wish the soul away,  
Till youth and genial years are down,  
And all the life of life is gone.

The pitiable truth of this song must ever recommend it to only too many hearts—laying aside all consideration of its felicitous diction. Amanda was a Miss Young, sister of Mrs Robertson, wife of the surgeon to the royal household at Kew. Be it also recollected that Thomson is the author of the noble song "Rule, Britannia," which was first sung in the *Masque of Alfred*; a joint composition of his with Mallet, which was represented at Clefden House, before the Prince of Wales, on the birthday of the Princess Augusta, in 1740.

The possibility of being successful as a song-writer does not seem to depend on success in general poetry; and it is sometimes found that a comparatively obscure and less educated class of poets are the most happy in this department, in consequence probably of their giving more immediate attention to popular taste, and freer vent to natural sentiment. Thus, few have produced better songs than Henry Carey, one of those authors who are despised in their own time for the want of status in life and of pretensions to learning, and hardly allowed their due meed of praise, even after the memory of all external circumstances has been buried with them in the tomb. Carey was the author of both the words and music of "God save the King," which has been ascribed to so many earlier names; and he is well known to have written the amusing burlesque of "Chrononhotonthologos." His "Sally in our Alley," as perhaps the most unaffected effusion of simple plebeian sentiment in the language, might almost be placed at the very head of the national anthology—

Of all the girls that are so smart,  
There's none like pretty Sally;  
She is the darling of my heart,  
And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week,  
I dearly love but one day,  
And that's the day that comes betwixt  
The Saturday and Monday;  
For then I'm drest in all my best,  
To walk abroad with Sally;  
She is the darling of my heart,  
And she lives in our alley.

His own account of the origin of this song presents a delightful picture. "A shoemaker's apprentice, making holiday with his sweetheart, treated her with a sight of Bedlam, the puppet-shows, the flying chairs, and all the elegance of Moorfields; from whence, proceeding to the Farthing Pye-house, he gave her a collection of buns, cheesecakes, gammon of bacon, stuffed beef, and bottled ale; through all which scenes the author dodged them (charmed with the simplicity of their courtship), from whence he drew this little sketch of nature; but being then young and obscure, he was very much ridiculed for this performance; which, nevertheless, made its way into the polite world, and amply recompensed him by the applause of the divine Addison, who was pleased more than once to mention it with approbation." "Poor Carey," says D'Israeli, "the delight of the Muses, and delighting with the Muses, experienced all their trials and all their treacheries. At the time that this poet could neither walk the streets, nor be seated at the convivial board, without listening to his own songs and his own music—for in truth the whole nation was echoing his verse, and crowded theatres were clapping to his wit and humour—while this man himself, urged by his strong humanity, had founded a fund for decayed musicians—at this moment was poor Carey himself so broken-hearted, and his own common comforts so utterly neglected, that, in despair, not waiting for Nature to relieve him from the burden of existence,

he laid violent hands on himself; and, when found dead, had only a halfpenny in his pocket. Such was the fate of the author of some of the most popular pieces in our language."

Charles Dibdin, the great ornament of modern English song before the days of Moore, was another of this class of writers. He was born about the year 1748, at Southampton, where his father was a silversmith. He commenced life as a chorister in the cathedral of Winchester, and at a very early age was an unsuccessful candidate for the situation of organist at Bishop's Waltham, in Hampshire. Excepting a few lessons from the Winchester organist, he was entirely his own instructor in the art which he was destined to adorn, much of his early knowledge being obtained from scoring the concertos of Corelli. At fifteen he proceeded to London, and became a subordinate singer in Covent Garden Theatre, where, next year, he was permitted to bring out a musical pastoral of his own writing and composing, entitled *The Shepherd's Artifice*. For some years he continued to perform and to supply music at this and afterwards at Drury Lane Theatre, without much distinction, till, in 1768, his performance of Mungo in *The Padlock*, and the music which he composed for that piece, gave him celebrity in both capacities. Of the music ten thousand copies were sold in the first thirteen years, and yet the author only profited by it to the extent of forty-five pounds. He was now engaged as a regular composer for Drury Lane, then under the management of Garrick; and among the pieces which he contributed (of some of which the literary department was also his) may be mentioned *The Waterman*, *The Jubilee*, *The Deserter*, and *Liberty Hall*. Several of the songs in these dramas, particularly those in *Liberty Hall* of "the High-mettled Racer," "Jack Rautlin," and "the Bells of Aberdovey," attained high popularity, and were among the earliest successful specimens of his abilities as a song-writer.

A difference with Mr Garrick having induced him, at the end of his engagement, to leave Drury Lane Theatre, he set up a new species of amusement at Exeter 'Change, under the title of the *Comic Mirror*, in which puppets were made to personate well-known characters. He afterwards became manager and composer for a theatre called the Royal Circus, near the Surrey extremity of Blackfriars' Bridge; from which, at the end of two seasons, he retired a loser. Next he set up an entertainment, in which he was himself sole writer, composer, manager, and performer, and which he continued above twenty years, producing in that time a great number and variety of short pieces, bearing such names as *The Whim of the Moment*, *The Quizzes*, *The General Election*, *The Frisk*, *Valentine's Day*, and *Britons Strike Home*. The first-mentioned piece contained his popular sea-song of "Poor Jack," of which 17,000 copies were sold in the course of a few years; while, of another sea-song, "the Greenwich Pensioner," which he has been heard to say, was written and composed in an hour, 11,000 copies were sold, by which he cleared no less than £400. These entertainments were successively given in an auction-room in King Street, Covent Garden; at the Lyceum in Exeter 'Change; in premises belonging to the Polygraphic Society; and at a theatre which he built for himself out of his profits, in Leicester Fields, and to which he gave the characteristic name of Sans Souci. During the same period, he published several literary works, among which may be particularised a *Musical Tour through England* (1787); *Hannah Hewitt*, a novel; the *Younger Brother*, a novel; a *History of the Stage*, in five volumes; and the *Professional Life of Mr Dibdin* (1802). His grand aim being to take advantage of the public *whim of the moment*, he applied himself, from the commencement of the French revolutionary war, to the production of pieces in which there was some reference to the military and nautical mania then possessing the national mind; and these he usually illustrated by songs breathing an ardent spirit of patriotism, and entering deeply and minutely into the circumstances of the military and naval life. To this circumstance have we been indebted for the many admirable naval songs of Dibdin, which form a department of English poetry entirely by themselves, alike remarkable for tenderness, humour, and descriptive power.

The dramatic compositions of Dibdin were above seventy in number; his songs, of every kind, above twelve hundred. Notwithstanding all these exertions, the bountifulness of his disposition reduced him in the decline of life to poverty. His poetical services to the state, of which it would be difficult to estimate the real value, were then rewarded by the government with a pension of two hundred pounds. But this being cut off at a change of administration, he was compelled to open a shop for the sale of music and musical instruments in the Strand; an enterprise which terminated in bankruptcy. He on this occasion laid such a simple, candid, and satisfactory statement of his affairs before the commissioners and his creditors, as redounded greatly to his credit, and procured him an early grant of his certificate. He was left, however, quite destitute; when a few gentlemen, almost wholly unknown to him, originated a subscription for the benefit of the veteran bard, and were the means of purchasing for him a small life annuity, with a reversion for his widow and daughter. Upon this he subsisted till his death, which took place on the 25th of July 1814, after a long illness, during which he was reduced to the last stage of bodily in-

firmity, and to very severe suffering. His sons Thomas and Charles, who followed the theatrical profession, were, like himself, the authors of many small pieces for the stage.

We can give but one specimen of Dibdin, but it shall be the poem for which, of all others, his name will be held in respect by future times—the touching and imaginative "Tom Bowling:"—

Here a sheer hulk lies poor Tom Bowling,  
The darling of our crew;  
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,  
For death has broached him to.  
His form was of the manliest beauty,  
His heart was kind and soft;  
Faithful below he did his duty,  
But now he's gone aloft.  
Tom never from his word departed,  
His virtues were so rare;  
His friends were many and true-hearted,  
His Poll was kind and fair:  
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly,  
Ah! many's the time and oft!  
But mirth is turn'd to melancholy,  
For Tom is gone aloft.  
Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,  
When He who all commands  
Shall give, to call life's crew together,  
The word to pipe all hands.  
Thus death, who kings and tars despatches,  
In vain Tom's life has doff'd;  
For though his body's under hatches,  
His soul is gone aloft.

In the present age, a return has taken place to the sentimental style of song-writing practised in the seventeenth century; and Moore, Bayley, and Proctor, must be considered the great existing masters of the art. With the productions of these writers, however, the public must be so familiar, that it does not seem necessary to extend this little sketch by particularly adverting to them.

#### THRILLING INCIDENTS.

In the recently published entertaining work, "A Winter in the Far West," by C. F. Hoffman of New York, in which the author describes the scenery and manners of the western states of the Union, we have the following account of some natural caverns in Western Virginia:—"Since I last wrote to you, I have explored several more of those limestone caverns with which the country abounds; one of which, indeed, is said to extend, like an enormous cellar, beneath the village of Abingdon, a flourishing county town about twenty miles from this place; but no cave that I have yet seen compares with the Natural Tunnel, in Scott county. It is a vaulted passage-way of two hundred yards, through a mountainous ridge some five or six hundred feet high. The ridge lies like a connecting mound between two parallel hills, of about the same elevation as itself; and a brook, that winds through the wooded gorge between these hills, appears to have worn its way through the limestone rib that binds the two together. The cavernous passage is nearly in the form of an S. The entrance, at the upper side, is through a tangled swamp; where, in following down the stream, you come in front of a rude arch, whose great height, from the irregular face of the cliff being covered with vines and bushes, it is difficult to estimate, until you attempt to throw a stone to the top of the vault. The ceiling drops a few yards from the entrance, till, at the point where, from the peculiar shape of the cavern, the shadows from either end meet in the midst, it is not more than twenty feet high. The vault then suddenly rises, and becomes loftier and more perfect in form as you emerge from the lower end. Finally, it *flares* upward, so that the edges of the arch lose themselves in the projecting face of the cliff, which here rises from a gravelly soil to the height of four hundred feet; smooth as if chiselled by an artist, and naked as death.—The width of the tunnel varies from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet, the small stream winding through its centre.

The sun was in the centre of the heavens as I stood beneath that stupendous arch, watching the swallows wheeling around the airy vault above me, and yet more than half the glen was in deep shadow. I had been told, whether jestingly or not, that the place was a favourite retreat for bears and panthers; and while following down the brook a few yards, I was somewhat startled, upon casting a glance into a recess in the rocky bank above me, to meet a pair of bright eyes glaring from the bushes which sheltered the nook. But the sudden movement of drawing a pistol frightened the wild animal from its covert, and it proved to be only an opossum, that glided along the trunk of a fallen tree, and disappeared in the thickets above. I paused again and again, in retracing my steps through the sinuous vault, to admire its gloomy grandeur; and then mounted my horse, which was tethered in the swamp at its entrance.

My road led immediately over the tunnel; but the thick forest on either side precluded a view from the top of the precipice, unless by approaching its edge. This it was necessary to do on foot. The glen thus viewed presents the appearance of a mere fissure in the mountain side; but the chasm is so sudden and deep that the first glance is startling when your foot presses the edge; and your eye swims when it would



pierce the shadowy gorge below. The tall sapling growth of buckeye and linden that spring within the dell, and lift their slender stems and sickly-coloured leaves so aspiringly, yet faintly, towards the light, sink into mere shrubs when viewed from this eminence; while the pines and oaks around you, which had appeared equally insignificant when viewed from below, seem now almost to interlace their branches over the gulf. A thrilling incident is said to have occurred here a few years since. There is a cavernous recess about midway in the face of the precipice, whose height, you will recollect, is estimated at more than three hundred feet; and some bold adventurer determined to be let down to explore this fissure. He easily found some of his acquaintance who consented to assist in the experiment; and standing on the edge of the chasm, they began to lower him down by a rope attached to his body.

After descending some forty or fifty feet, our adventurer discovered that the side of the precipice shelved so much inwardly that it was impossible for him to touch the wall even at so short a distance from the top. It was necessary then to provide some pointed instrument by which he could hold on to the face of the cliff as he descended. He was accordingly pulled up once more, and then, after providing himself with a 'gig,' or long fish-spear, much used in the adjacent rivers, he started anew upon his perilous voyage. The gig appeared to answer its purpose extremely well, though the task of thrusting it from time to time in the crevices of the rock, as the cord was gradually slackened from above, was both tiresome and exhausting. The point proposed was just attained, and the patient adventurer was about to reap the reward of his toil, and plant his foot in the fissure, when his companions shouted from above that their coil of rope had run out.

It was too provoking to be thus a second time disappointed, when his object seemed almost within his grasp, and but a few more yards of cord would have enabled him to complete his purpose. He had given too much trouble, and encountered too much peril, now to abandon his design completely. Thus reasoned the bold cragsman, as, clinging like a bat to the wall, he hung midway between heaven and earth; and determining not to give up his point, he shouted to his comrades to splice a *grape-vine* to the end of the rope! The substitute was easily procured, and being quickly attached, more line was at once payed out from above. He had now descended so far that the shelving precipice projected far over his head, almost like the flat ceiling of a chamber; but still his fishingspear enabled him to keep close to the face of the rock, and practice now taught him to handle it with dexterity and confidence. He is at last opposite to the cavernous opening he would explore; and without waiting to measure its depth, he balances himself against a jutting point of rock with one hand, while the other strikes his javelin at a crevice in the sides of the deep recess before him. The spear falls short; the adventurer is at once detached from the face of the cliff to which he had been so carefully adhering; and the great angle at which the rope that sustains him has been now drawn, sends him swinging like a pendulum over the frightful gulf. The *grape-vine*—so strong and secure as long as there is a perpendicular pull upon it—now cracks and splits as if its fibres could not bear the strain; while the weight at the end of its spins round in the air, and the frayed bark falls in strips upon the alarmed cragsman, as he watches it grate off upon the edge of the precipice above him. He maintains his self-possession, however, while his companions pull carefully and steadily upon the fragile cable. He soon sees the knot at which the rope is tied to it in their hands, and a shout of triumph hails his approach to the top, where he is at last safely landed; perfectly content, one may conceive, to forego all the pleasure that might have arisen from a more satisfactory examination of the recess, from which he had made so expeditious and involuntary an exit. The hair-breadth escape of this cool climber of crags reminds me of one equally thrilling that I received from the lips of the hero of it, soon after entering these mountains.

I had heard of a remarkable saltpetre cave, within a few miles of the inn where I was staying, at Cumberland Gap, and was anxious to explore it. There was an individual in the neighbourhood who was said to have worked in the cavern, in manufacturing saltpetre, at a time when there was a great demand for gunpowder, during the last war. This man I attempted to procure as a guide; but though he acted as a pioneer for me to several wild scenes, nothing could persuade him to take me to this. He at length, with some emotion, assigned his reasons, which will better appear after I have given you the features of the place, as they were described to me. The opening of the cavern is in West Virginia, on the side of the Cumberland Mountains; but one of its branches has been traced far into the adjacent state of Kentucky, and there are said to be several chambers of it in Tennessee. I have myself, indeed, in exploring one of its supposed passages, that opened two miles from the main embouchure, passed the dividing line of two of these states. The most direct of its branches has, in former years, been measured with a chain, to the extent of seven miles. The form of the cavern is as remarkable as its size: as, just far enough within the entrance to shroud it in darkness, there is a precipice of more than two hundred feet (two hundred and

sixty-two is said to be the measured depth); and the only mode of advancing farther into the cave is by descending here, when you come to a flat surface, whereon your farther progress is unimpeded. The sides of the precipice are marked here and there by ledges of rock, and the persons employed in manufacturing saltpetre had, with considerable ingenuity, adjusted a chain of ladders, from one ledge to another, so as to form, apparently, a continuous staircase down the perpendicular side of the cliff.

At the close of the war, twenty years ago, the cave became deserted. The population then was not dense around, and there being but little travel along the nearest highway, the place was seldom mentioned, and never resorted to. It chanced one day, about six years since, that the man whom I wished now to guide me thither passed the mouth of the cavern, with a companion, in hunting. Sitting down near it, to refresh themselves, they began to recall their recollection of these who had worked in the cave in by-gone years; and the period seemed so recent, that they thought it worth while to look whether none of their implements, then used, were yet to be found in the pit; determining that any of the tools that might be left, after so long an interval would be a fair prize for themselves.

Entering the cavern, they first, by the light of a pine-torch, carefully examined the wooden ladders which had been now for sixteen years exposed to the damps of the place. They had been made of cedar, and still appeared sound. The cautious hunters agreed that all was right, and both descended. They reached the bottom in safety, and, as expected, they found several neglected tools still remaining there; and selecting a pickaxe and a spade, they commenced their ascent upon the ladders. The first flight was soon accomplished; but their steps became slower as they got farther from the bottom, and as the implements which they carried could not be balanced upon the shoulders, each had but one hand upon the ladder, and of course as that became tired, each was compelled to move more and more carefully. Patience and steadiness, however, at last brought them near the summit. In fact, the upper rung of the ladder was in view, when the foremost man taking hold of one more decayed than the rest, it broke in his grasp, and he fell backward with his whole weight upon the chest of his companion; the other reeled and staggered with the blow, but still kept his one-handed hold upon the ladder. The iron tools went clanging to the bottom. There was a moment of intense anxiety whether he could sustain his comrade; there was another of thrilling doubt whether his comrade could regain the ladder; and both were included in one mortal agony of fear and horror. But the falling man clutched the ladder instantly, and laying a frantic grip with both hands upon the sides, they gained the top at last together. 'Stranger,' concluded the man, while his voice faltered at the end of the tale, 'we knelt to God at the mouth of that cave, and swore never to enter it more.'

#### LOVE ME, LOVE MY DOG,

A POPULAR FALLACY.

[By Elia.]

"GOOD sir, or madam, as it may be, we most willingly embrace the offer of your friendship. We long have known your excellent qualities. We have wished to have you nearer to us; to hold you within the very innermost fold of our heart. We can have no reserve towards a person of your open and noble nature. The frankness of your humour suits us exactly. We have been long looking for such a friend. Quick—let us disburthen our troubles into each other's bosom—let us make our single joys shine by reduplication—But *yap, yap, yap!* What is this confounded cur? he has fastened his tooth, which is none of the bluntest, just in the fleshy part of my leg."

"It is my dog, sir. You must love him for my sake. Here, Test—Test—Test!"—"But he has bitten me."

"Ay, that he is apt to do, till you are better acquainted with him. I have had him three years. He never bites me."

*Yap, yap, yap!*—"He is at it again."—"Oh, sir, you must not kick him. He does not like to be kicked. I expect my dog to be treated with all the respect due to myself."

"But do you always take him out with you, when you go a friendship-hunting?"—"Invariably. 'Tis the sweetest, prettiest, best-conditioned animal. I call him my *test*—the touchstone by which I try a friend. No one can properly be said to love me, who does not love him."

"Excuse us, dear sir—or madam aforesaid—if, upon further consideration, we are obliged to decline the otherwise invaluable offer of your friendship. We do not like dogs."—"Mighty well, sir—you know the conditions—you may have worse offers. Come along, Test."

The above dialogue is not so imaginary, but that, in the intercourse of life, we have had frequent occasions of breaking off an agreeable intimacy by reason of these canine appendages. They do not always come in the shape of dogs; they sometimes wear the more plausible and human character of kinsfolk, near acquaintances, my friend's friend, his partner, his wife, or his children. We could never yet form a friend-

ship—not to speak of more delicate correspondences—however much to our taste, without the intervention of some third anomaly, some impertinent clog affixed to the relation—the understood dog in the proverb. The good things of life are not to be had singly, but come to us with a mixture; like a school-boy's holiday, with a task affixed to the tail of it. What a delightful companion is —, if he did not always bring his tall cousin with him! He seems to grow with him; like some of those double births, which we remember to have read of with such wonder and delight in the old "Athenian Oracle," where Swift commenced author by writing Pindaric odes (what a beginning for him!) upon Sir William Temple. There is the picture of the brother, with the little brother peeping out at his shoulder—a species of fraternity which we have no name of kin close enough to comprehend. When — comes, poking in his head and shoulders into your room, as if to feel his entry, you think, surely you have now got him to yourself—what a three hours' chat we shall have! But, ever in the haunch of him, and before his diffident body is well disclosed in your apartment, appears the haunting shadow of the cousin, over-peering his modest kinsman, and sure to overlay the expected good talk with his insufferable procreancy of stature, and uncorresponding dwarfishness of observation. Misfortunes seldom come alone. 'Tis hard when a blessing comes accompanied. Cannot we like Sempronius, without sitting down to chess with her eternal brother? or know Sulpicia, without knowing all the round of her card-playing relations? must my friend's brethren of necessity be mine also? must we be hand and glove with Dick Selby the parson, or Jack Selby the calico printer, because W. S., who is neither, but a ripe wit and a critic, has the misfortune to claim a common parentage with them? Let him lay down his brothers, and 'tis odds but we will cast him in a pair of our's (we have a superflux) to balance the concession. Let F. H. lay down his garrulous uncle; and Honorius dismiss his rapid wife, and superfluous establishment of six boys—things between boy and manhood—too ripe for play, too raw for conversation—that come in impudently staring their father's old friend out of countenance; and will neither aid nor let alone the conference: that we may once more meet upon equal terms, as we were wont to do in the disengaged state of bachelorhood.

It is well if your friend or mistress be content with these canicular probations. Few young ladies but in this sense keep a dog. But when Rutilla bounds at you her tiger aunt, or Ruspina expects you to cherish and fondle her viper sister, whom she has preposterously taken into her bosom, to try stinging conclusions upon your constancy, they must not complain if the house be rather thin of suitors. Soylla must have broken off many excellent matches in her time, if she insisted upon all that loved her loving her dogs also.

An excellent story to this moral is told of Merry, of Della Cruscan memory. In tender youth he loved and courted a modest appanage to the opera, in truth a dancer, who had won him by the artless contrast between her manners and situation. She seemed to him a native violet, that had been transplanted by some rude accident into that exotic and artificial hot-bed. Nor, in truth, was she less genuine and sincere than she appeared to him. He wooed and won this flower. Only for appearance' sake, and for due honour to the bride's relations, she craved that he might have the attendance of her friends and kindred at the approaching solemnity. The request was too amiable not to be conceded; and in this solicitude for conciliating the good will of mere relations, he found a presage of her superior attentions to himself, when the golden shaft should have "killed the flock of all affections else." The morning came; and at the Star and Garter, Richmond—the place appointed for the breakfasting—accompanied with one English friend, he impatiently awaited what reinforcements the bride should bring to grace the ceremony. A rich muster she had made. They came in six coaches—the whole corps du ballet—French, Italian, men and women. Monsieur De B., the famous *pirouetter* of the day, led his fair spouse, but craggy, from the banks of the Seine. The Prima Donna had sent her excuse. But the first and second Buffas were there; and Signor Sc., and Signora Ch., and Madame V., with a countless cavalcade besides of chorusers, figurantes, at the sight of whom Merry afterwards declared, that "then for the first time it struck him seriously, that he was about to marry—a dancer." But there was no help for it. Besides, it was her day; these were, in fact, her friends and kinsfolk. The assemblage, though whimsical, was all very natural. But when the bride—handing out of the last coach—a still more extraordinary figure than the rest—presented to him as her father—the gentleman that was to give her away—no less a person than Signor Delpini himself—with a sort of pride, as much as to say, See what I have brought to do us honour!—the thought of so extraordinary a paternity quite overcame him; and slipping away under some pretence from the bride and her motley adherents, poor Merry took horse from the backyard to the nearest sea-coast, from which, shipping himself to America, he shortly after consorted himself with a more congenial match in the person of Miss Brunton; relieved from his intended clown father, and a bevy of painted Buffas for bridesmaids.—*Last Essays of Elia.*

## Column for Anglers.

## BAIT-FISHING AND TROLLING.

This being now the season for angling, we may advantageously offer another chapter on that delightful art, from the useful treatise of Mr Stoddart—taking first the subject of bait-fishing.

"The first object of the ground angler is to obtain and prepare his worms. These reptiles are to be found in greatest quantities on a rich moist soil. Clay, sand, and peat-moss, afford them in very small numbers. They will generate quickly under all sorts of manure and decayed substances, vegetable as well as animal. Four or five different varieties are known in this country; among which we find the large lob or dew worm, an excellent bait for salmon and sea trout. These may be picked up in any garden, by a ready hand during the summer twilights, when they crawl out upon the surface in search of food. They are a beautiful and subtle worm, and require to be seized with some address. Secondly, we have the common earth worm, a smaller and more inactive sort. Thirdly, the brandling, a beautifully streaked variety, found only in very rich and warm soils, among hot beds, near common sewers, and at the side of tan pits; the red worm also breeds along with it, and both are highly esteemed by anglers. We, however, reckon the brandling a soft bait, and disagreeable to handle, being filled with a yellow liquid, which issues out on the slightest pressure. This reptile generates with wonderful rapidity; a dozen or two of them, in the course of a few days, when placed among warm manure sufficient in quantity, will produce many myriads, as we have witnessed. The red worm is certainly superior as a bait, although somewhat small and clear.

Worms may be dug up with a spade or a three-pronged instrument, such as is used for raising potatoes. We, however, prefer another method of taking them. Insert a thickish stick or dibble into the soil, eight or ten inches deep. Move it backwards and forwards with tolerable quickness, so as to agitate the earth round about. After a minute or so, every worm within the circle of agitation, which may extend several feet, will appear at the surface. The reason of this is, that some mole is imagined to be near at hand by these reptiles, who, accordingly, attempt their escape by shooting upwards, and then travelling over the top instead of working their way out of reach, through a stubborn mass of earth, which their natural enemy might penetrate much faster. This method of capturing worms has the advantage of bringing them into your hands in a purified condition, free from filth and injury, both of which your delving instrument is apt to occasion.

In taking your worms, have a flannel bag near you filled with fresh clean moss, into which drop them when seized. They should be kept two or three days in a cool place before used. In order to be thoroughly purged and toughened. Take care that the moss become neither too dry nor too wet; a spoonful of cream or sweet milk is a good remedy for the former defect—a better is to change it every other day for some newly plucked. In preparing worms, a common flower pot is a good recipient. Some anglers reddens theirs with a mixture of pounded brick, oatmeal, and water: the effect of this composition is nevertheless entirely fanciful.

The manner of fixing the worm we leave entirely to one's own taste: a general rule is to conceal the hook without injuring the appearance of the bait. Most anglers use two worms in this way. They insert the hook at one-third of its whole length's distance from the head of one, and bring it out at the same distance from the tail; they then commence with the other in like manner, only the hook is not brought out again at all, but the barb left covered near the extremity of the worm.

Some anglers permit their worm to be carried forward by the current; others move it across with a heavy sinker appended, so as to keep it near the bottom. And as to the manner in which trout take the bait, it may be noticed, that at the first dart they engross the whole hook within their mouths; wherefore, many, knowing this, strike at the moment: the fish then let the bait go, and commence upon the worm more leisurely, killing it with repeated bites before it is finally swallowed.

For quick striking, a very short line is necessary, not above the length of the rod; this ought always to be kept at its full stretch, and moved in a half circle with the angler. It requires some degree of perception to know the exact instant when the fish first seizes your bait; it does so with such softness, and with no likeness of a tug, as one is apt to imagine; nay, it merely closes its jaws upon the hook, as a gaping oyster would do upon one's finger. Then is your opportunity for striking; if you neglect it, you allow the trout its more leisurely process of nibbling, and its chances of escape. In striking with the short line, do it sharply, and never against the current, but rather with it, in a diagonal direction, and not too high. The reason of this advice is obvious, for all fish feed with their heads pointing up the stream—kindly giving you the choice of pulling the hook into or out of their mouths; the latter of which purposes you accomplish, to a dead certainty, by striking against the current. This whip-jack manner of bait-fishing is very deadly with an experienced hand. The long-line anglers make nothing of their method comparatively; and yet, among clear waters, and where fish

are few, or bite shyly, patience and a long line will carry the day. Remarkably fine gut ought to be used by all ground anglers, whatever be the practice.

To all bait-fishers, Scotland affords excellent sport; her rivers run so strongly, and are malnourished by so many sources in the shape of mountain burns. These romantic streamlets abound in trout; every stone shelters its inhabitant, and the meaneast pool is peopled with numbers. Burn fish, however, are generally of a small size; they seldom exceed a pound in weight, except in the spawning season, when larger ones ascend from broader streams, or lochs at a distance. Still the taking of them is a pleasant pastime, especially when they bite eagerly at your worm, as they do during rain and in discoloured water. At such times you have only to drop your bait without art, and the fish will manage its own ruin.

In ground-fishing for salmon, use lob-worms, fresh from the earth, and not toughened or prepared in any way. Angle with a long line, and give time before striking; you will fix him at the second or third tug. Akin to this sort of angling is roe-fishing, concerning which, we remark, that in autumn it is the most fatal method of capturing trout, and is growing much into practice in the south of Scotland. The roe is procured generally from the grille of salmon, and used either in a raw state, made into paste, or salted entire. We give the following receipt for salting roe: Procure some pounds of the freshest—notice that it be red and firm; take off the membrane and broken parts; wash the spawn in lukewarm milk and water, carefully separating the individual particles; beat together three parts of fine salt, and one of saltpetre, and rub the whole carefully with the mixture, in the proportion of an ounce and a quarter to the pound of roe; spread it thus prepared over a flannel cloth until quite dry and tough; then stow it in pots, and run the top over with lard to exclude the air. This preparation will keep good for a long time. In making paste, parboil and pound the roe, salting it with the same mixture as we have just described. One great object is to preserve and heighten the natural colour of the spawn, a somewhat difficult matter we confess, and yet seemingly known better in England than here, where it is more angled with, and procured in greater quantities.

In angling, cover the point of your hook with a piece of roe cut with a knife, as large as a horse-bean, taking care, while attaching it, not to crush the ova; and employ a short line, striking quickly. Always fix upon one stream, and keep to it; you are not diminishing the number of fish near you, catch them as rapidly as you may. Some anglers previously bait the ground by throwing in a handful or two of spawn. This attracts and keeps the fish to the spot. Turbid and swollen waters are the best for roe-fishing, and your likeliest month is October.

We now come to treat of minnow fishing, by far the pleasantest method of capturing trout, next to angling with the fly. If you wish to engage in this pleasant sport, provide your minnows by means of a small drag-net or hook. Select those of a moderate size, and which shine whitest. They may be salted, but are best perfectly fresh. Fish in rapid streams, also in deep discoloured pools, and during a smart curl. Manage the minnow as you would your fly, throwing it down and across as far as you are able; bring it towards you about six inches or more below the surface, spinning rapidly by the aid of several swivels. When a fish rises, give him time before you strike; let him turn and gorge the bait, then strike sharply, and he is yours: all fly-fishers are apt to strike too soon, and miss the fish.

Trout seize a minnow by the middle or near the head, and you generally hook them on the upper hooks. In rivers where numbers of minnows are found, you must angle with the very smallest, not above an inch in length, and use a proportionate tackle. The trout in such waters love delicate titbits, and are absurdly nice in their feeding. Artificial minnows are sometimes employed by anglers, but generally fail, except in muddy waters and lochs.

Trolling with par for large trout is a glorious pastime, especially on a Highland loch, circled with mountain scenery—the craft of nature by incantation wrought, when the morning stars sang together. It needs intellect to enjoy it well, and a poet's heart to know its luxury. Take with you some choice and idle spirit, a rower he must be that can manage your airy shallop as the winds do a weathercock—can chant a ballad of yore of ladye and chieftain, and pranksome elf and kelpie wild—can speak to the echoes and to yourself, cheering you with wit and wisdom, and admiring your science and skill; and the gorgeous fish you are playing, twenty fathoms off, with a strong and steady hand, your heart 'high fluttering the while, like woman's when she loves."

Tackle for trolling should be dressed upon tried gimp. Bait as you do with a minnow: use a strong rod, heavy lead, and a long line of oiled cord, wound upon an easy reel. Choose a sunny day, with a stiffish breeze, and troll near but not among the weediest parts of the loch. Plant yourself at the boat-stern, and get rowed gently at the rate of three miles an hour, letting out from twenty to thirty yards of line betwixt you and your bait. Trout from six to nine pounds weight cause the best sport when hooked: a larger one seldom leaps or makes any violent exertion to escape; he swims sullenly, and at ease, regarding the angler with a sort of sovereign contempt. You

must row after him, and turn him if you can before he gets among weeds; never slack your line for an instant, and look well about you. Land as soon as you are able, and play him from the shore. Your companion will assist you at the death."

**EXHIBITION OF CATS.**—Cats, like dogs, may be taught a number of tricks. On the 11th April 1831, an exhibition of cats (six in number) was opened in Edinburgh by a company of Italians. These animals gave astonishing proofs of their intelligence. They were kept in a large sparrow box, and individually came forth, at the command of the exhibitor, and seemed perfectly to understand their duty. These well-tutored creatures beat a drum, turned a spit, struck upon an anvil, turned a coffee-roaster, and rang bells. Two of them, who seemed to be more sagacious than the rest, drew a bucket, suspended by a pulley, in the manner water is raised from a draw-well. The length of the rope was about six feet; and they perfectly understood when the bucket was high enough, when they stopped pulling. In the greater part of their performances they stood on their hind legs. We remarked an instance of great cunning in one of the animals, which was not at the time employed, but was in its box, and seemed to know that its companion, who was employed in drawing the water, would be rewarded the second time with a small bit of meat, which was put into the bucket. It came slyly out, and when the bucket was on a level with the place where it was sitting, caught hold of it with its claws, and purloined the beef. There was also in the exhibition a tame white rat, which the exhibitor brought out of a box, and desired one of the cats to kiss it, when it immediately licked the rat all over. He afterwards put it on the cat's head, and it walked over her body, without seeming to give her any unpleasant sensation. One of the cats would turn a wheel, only when a piece of meat, stuck on a spit, was put before it; but the instant it was removed, she stopped, and however loudly the exhibitor called to it, and even threatened to whip it, no attention was paid to his orders till the meat was replaced.—*Brown's Anecdotes of Quadrupeds.*

**SPONTANEOUS BURNING OF THE BODIES OF DRUNKARDS.**—The spontaneous combustion of the human body would appear to be the result of long and confirmed drunkenness in the individual who suffers. The constant drinking of ardent spirits saturates the whole fabric of the body, making it so highly inflammable, that, under certain circumstances, when a flame is contiguous, the catastrophe of burning to death ensues. The following account is given by Devergie, a French author, of the general manner of its occurrence:—"Spontaneous combustion commences by a bluish flame being seen to extend itself by little and little with an extreme rapidity over all the parts of the body affected; this always persists until the parts are blackened, and generally until they are burnt to a cinder. Many times attempts have been made to extinguish this flame with water, but without success. When the parts are touched, a fatish matter attaches itself to the finger, which still continues to burn. At the same time a very strong and disagreeable smell, having an analogy to burnt horn, spreads itself through the apartment. A thick black smoke escapes from the body, and attaches itself to the surface of the furniture in the form of a sweat, unctuous to the touch, and of an insupportable fetor. In many cases the combustion is arrested only when the flesh has been reduced to a cinder, and the bones to powder. Commonly, the feet and a portion of the head are not burnt. When the combustion is finished, an incinerated mass remains, which it is difficult to believe can be the whole of the body. All this may happen in the space of an hour and a half. It is rather uncommon for the furniture around it to take fire; sometimes even the clothes are not injured."

**IMITATION OF THE ANCIENTS.**—The imitation of the classics has perverted the whole taste of modern Europe on the subject of composition: it has made style a subject of cultivation and of praise, independently of ideas; whereas, by the ancients, style was never thought of but in complete subordination to matter. The ancients would as soon have thought of a coat in the abstract, as of style in the abstract: the merit of a style, in their eyes, was, that it exactly fitted the thought. Their first aim was, by the assiduous study of their subject, to secure to themselves thoughts worth expressing; their next was, to find words which would convey those thoughts with the utmost degree of nicety; and only when this was made sure did they think of ornament. Their style, therefore, whether ornamented or plain, grows out of their turn of thought, and may be admired, but cannot be imitated, by any one whose turn of thought is different.—*London Review.*

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